India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

In the past two weeks the numbers on famine relief have diminished, and in the Viceroy's telegram of August 27 they stand just over half a million: 507,000. The decline is mainly confined to Gujerat, and has not yet sensibly touched the Deccan. In the despatch of August 20, the rain had continued good and general, though ranging mostly from half to three-quarters normal; in the latest message, it has been "very deficient in parts of Madras (South), West Punjab, inland Burma," while only "fair rain has fallen elsewhere," irregularly distributed, and not making up for past deficiency. The cry, then, is for more rain still, and over wide expanses it is admitted to be "urgently needed." Only in the North Central Provinces is there a deluge. There is still a plentiful lack of information as to the real significance of the items forwarded by the Viceroy. The grave outstanding fact is that, for all the rain, and all the reported improvement, and all the unfailing hopes, there are still over half a million persons in need of State relief. The implications involved in such a fact are far-reaching and the future cannot be regarded without deep concern.

The Bombay Correspondent of the "Times" telegraphed on August 25 that the Bombay Legislative Council had passed the Land Revenue Bill by 14 votes to 9. "When the result of the division was announced, seven of the opponents left the Council hall, declining to take any further part in the proceedings." That was perhaps the most effective way of protesting against the machine-like refusal of the official majority to pay attention to public opinion. According to the Correspondent of the "Times," "the Governor said that the Opposition, if it had not deliberately misled the people, had misunderstood the objects of the measure; while Mr. Monteath said that he would have welcomed real criticism and endeavoured to profit by it, but that no reasonable body of men would be influenced by speeches and writings, however vigorous in language, which were beside the point." One is familiar with remarks of this kind. Our readers are by this time able to judge whether the allegation of irrelevance is justified. If it were, what would be thought of a Government so little able to express its meaning that its critics—men of intelligence not inferior to its own—with one accord completely misunderstood it? It is to be feared that the opponents of the new legislation understand its significance—immediate and remote—only too well.

Writing from Bombay on August 10, an Indian Correspondent says:—

> The Bombay Government are persevering with their Agrarian Bill, which has evoked such a volume of protest from every nook and corner of the Presidency—protest which found emphatic vent in the Town Hall two weeks since. You have learned by telegraph the substance of the proceedings of that monster meeting, the like of which has not taken place within the memory of the oldest-living citizen. This fact alone is conclusive evidence of the depth of popular feeling which the ill-considered and revolutionary measure has evoked. The contingent of 700 strong—delegates from the mofussil—gives additional emphasis to the unpopularity of the measure. But, as the proceedings of that monster meeting are already before you, you and others will judge for yourselves the nature of the revolution in the land tenure of this Presidency, which the Land Revenue Code Amendment Bill of 1901 contemplates. It is said, with what degree of truth it is not easy to say, that the Government of India has looked askance at the measure. It remains to be seen what course the Bombay Government will take at the coming meeting of the Legislative Council, advertised for the 22nd inst. As far as the popular representatives in the Council are concerned, it is satisfactory to know that they will oppose the measure tooth and nail, if it is at all persevered in. All the three elected from the different divisions, the Honourable Messrs. G. K. Gokhale, Gokuldas K. Parekh, and Daji Abaji Khare know full well the minutiæ of the system, and the tenure in vogue. They are perfectly conversant with the practical working of the Act, and are, therefore, certain to speak with unique authority on the subject—though of course we ought to expect the great Goliaths of officialdom of the Revenue Department to affect a superior knowledge of the rayat, compared with these gentlemen, who are born of the country, and belong to the soil. The Honourable Mr. Mehta, however, is a host in himself, and will no doubt be able to give a rejoinder to these official apostles of the land revenue system.

Lord George Hamilton when he made his financial statement in the House of Commons spoke of the opposition to the Bombay Land Revenue Bill as a money-lenders' agitation. This statement is hardly borne out by the great meeting held in Bombay on July 27, of which we have already published an account received by telegraph. Even the "Times of India," which has all along supported the Bill, and which heads its article, "The Sowcar and his Champions," admits that the meeting was as fairly representative as is possible in a country where the difficulty of organising such gatherings is exceptionally great, and it gives a report of the proceedings in its weekly edition which extends to eleven columns. The Hall is therein described as "packed," 700 of those present being delegates from various towns and villages in the Presidency. Mr. P. M. Mehta presided, and the speakers represented all classes of the community, from members of the Bombay Legislative Council to the barefooted patel of a country village.

Mr. N. V. Gokhale, who moved the first resolution, pointed out that though the lands of defaulters were liable to forfeiture, this is not to say that they were in every case forfeited. Forfeiture had all along been enforced only in flagrant cases of contumacy. But under the proposed law there would be a direct motive—the establishment of a tenure which the authorities considered preferable—for exacting forfeiture in all cases of default, and "in consequence of defaults committed during times of unprecedented distress and owing to helplessness brought on by a succession of dire calamities." The present Bill, he considered, went much further than the recent legislation in the Punjab, which only prevented alienation under certain circumstances.

As we announced in June last arrangements have been made by which a series of three lectures on India will be delivered before the "International Association for the Advancement of Science, Arts, and Education" which is holding an "International Assembly" at Glasgow in connexion with the Exhibition. On Monday next, September 2, Sir John Jardine will lecture upon "India: the Country and the People; British Provinces and Native States; Judicial Administration." On Wednesday Mr. Romesh Dutt, C.I.E., lectures upon "India: Industries, Trade, and Agriculture; Railways and Irrigation; Land Revenue Administration and Finance." And on Friday Professor Murison lectures upon "India: Education and the Press; Local Self-Government and General Progress." It may be mentioned that the General President of the International Association is M. Leon Bourgeois, the General Secretary, M. Liard, and the Assistant General Secretary, Professor P. Geddes. Among the "National Presidents" the "British Group" are Mr. Bryce and Sir A. Geikie. We propose to report at some length the three lectures relating to India.

Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will address meetings on India as follows:—

September 22.—Open-air meeting, at Peckham Rye—6.30 p.m.
October 16.—Brixton Literary and Discussion Society, 36, Mervan Road, Brixton.
November 1.—Liverpool Peace Society, 6, Ramilies Road, Sefton Park, Liverpool.
November 13.—Young Scots Association, Edinburgh.

"A Correspondent" of the "Times" (Aug. 23) contrasts the handling of plague in India and in Egypt, to the disadvantage of the Indian measures. Lord Sandhurst, it will be remembered, had pressure brought to bear upon him by the Government of India in the direction of processes that he disapproved. Now this "Correspondent" carries the pressure a stage further, tracing its origin to Whitehall. He was in Bombay at the time, and he says: "it was only when the Local Government were directed from Whitehall to initiate more vigorous measures than they thought desirable that the people were stricken with fear, not of plague, but of plague measures, and fled from the city in large numbers, spreading the germs of the disease throughout the Western Presidency, and ultimately to other parts of India." The motive is admitted to be good, but "in the light of the sad experience subsequently gained, everyone now sees that the means used to this end were the last that should have been employed." Some of us gave ample warning, which would have saved "the sad experience subsequently gained," if it had only been attended to. The "Correspondent" also remarks on the official observation in the last "East India Progress and Condition Report" that "so far plague has not touched 10 per cent. of all the villages of India." "Seeing," he says, "that four-fifths of the Indian population live in villages, the fact that nearly one in ten of those rural places have been attacked by a disease which has exacted its chief toll from a few large towns is very serious, and cannot be properly regarded with the complacency which the official way of stating it would seem to indicate." The causes of plague are yet to find, but the "Correspondent" urges persistence of enquiry, and hopes for something from the fact that "the people no longer misinterpret the motives of Government plague policy and are no longer ranged against it."

The "Times" (Aug. 22) reviews the history of Indian trade with Tibet. The most important development appears to be the recent plan of preferring to the ancient mountainous routes between Tibet and China the route from Chinese coast towns by sea to Calcutta and by land to Yatung, or vice versa. The significance of this, the "Times" writer thinks, "in expanding the commercial relations between India and Tibet can hardly be exaggerated." Well, we trust the stream of business will be carried on profitably to all parties on a peaceful basis. We confess we do not like the look of some of the writer's expressions. "If trade is to be extended satisfactorily," he says, "good roads must be made into the heart of Tibet." This sounds somewhat aggressive: it seems to us that it lies with the Tibetans to decide what roads they will have in their country, and what kind of roads. Not that the words are necessarily aggressive in themselves, but they seem aggressive by the reflection of what follows: "and the monopoly of trade enjoyed by the Lamas must cease." The assumption is that "only foreign traders can gauge the resources and the needs of the country, and they should be permitted to enter more freely." The monopoly of the Lamas is a most serious obstacle, because "from interested motives they may arbitrarily stop trade for months." We hope, all the same, that their own people will be left to deal with them, and bring them to reason. "It is not surprising," says the writer, "though certainly discouraging, to find the name of Germany most conspicuous on the packing cases sent to the Tibetan mart which English energy has opened to trade." This is no new subject of discouragement, or of surprise either. In any case, if the Lamas are to be dealt with forcibly, we trust the enterprise will be left to the Germans.

The Secretary of State for India adverted in the course of his "Budget speech" to the necessity and difficulty of establishing agricultural banks. That the matter is making some progress in India was shown by a conference held on July 27 under the presidency of Sir Antony MacDonnell in the Thornhill Library, Allahabad. Mr. Bell, the Collector of Banda, said that in four villages of his district gentlemen had started banks, two being zemindars. In three cases they had found the capital, which in the fourth was provided by members of the bank. Mr. Ferard, Collector of Allahabad, said he had ten banks in his district, with an average membership of fifty. Though there was no great enthusiasm, yet the people entered the banks freely, and borrowed money freely. The banks were on estates administered by the Court of Wards, and the authorities lent money to the banks at 3 per cent., which was then lent to the members at nine. The members understood that they were jointly responsible for the money. Mr. Jwala Prasad, Collector Jalaun, had four banks, and other Collectors had three and two, but the Collector of Hamirpur, a backward district, had not yet started any.

Sir Antony MacDonnell urged the advantage of forming a society with capital held in shares to organise agricultural banks. If the zemindars managed the banks, there would be no progress towards self-help. On the other hand he thought both zemindars and bunnias should aid in financing the organisation society. Mr. Jwala Prasad even thought that the bunnias might become members of the banks. An account having been given of a bunnia who threatened to boycott members of the bank, the Lieutenant-Governor said that the banks might be of use to the bunnia because if he lent to a solvent member he would have better security. Whatever was purchased by money advanced by the bank, his Honour proposed to exempt from Civil Court proceedings. Mr. Rama Shankar, Collector of Fatehpur, said that the villagers were suspicious and thought the advances of the banks were something like "takavi." He was asked why they should be suspicious of "takavi," and Sir Antony MacDonnell answered by expressing his fear that the villagers did not get the whole of the "takavi" they borrowed.

Sir Antony MacDonnell has since held a further conference on the question of agricultural banks—this time at Benares. Mr. Lovett, Collector of Benares, informed Sir Antony that the Maharaja of Benares was willing to start a certain number of banks as an experiment, and this was confirmed by the Maharaja's Dewan. The utility of establishing banks was generally agreed to, and the landlords of Mirzapur, Ghazipur, and Ballia Districts, promised to do their utmost to open banks in their own localities. At the close of the conference, the Lieutenant-Governor made enquiries as to the winter crops and was told that owing to the rains being late and deficient, they were not thriving.

The Tenth Provincial Conference in Bombay was held at Satara on May 12 and 13, and, strangely enough, the print of the proceedings has only now reached us. The Hon. Mr. Gokuldas K. Parekh was President, Mr. B. G. Tilak moved the first resolution, and the Hon. Messrs. Chhatre and Gokhale were among those present. The meeting had been delayed for three years on account of famine and plague, and would have been delayed still longer but for the likelihood of misrepresentations of the true causes. The proceedings impress the fearful obsession of "a dire and widespread calamity." As Rao Bahadur V. N. Pathak, the chairman of the Reception Committee, said, "that such a catastrophe (as the famine) should occur under a well-ordered Government, and in a country equipped with all the appliances of modern civilisation—railways, telegraphs, steamships, etc.—and during a period of profound peace and tranquillity, must give cause for serious reflection." He pressed for preventive measures, as distinguished from measures of mitigation:

> These measures, briefly, are: (1) the extension of irrigation works, to a certain, but, we think, still to a large extent; (2) the promotion of home industries and manufactures, in order to give variety of occupation and means of livelihood to the people; (3) the construction of small light railways, with rupee capital, to act as feeders to the trunk lines; (4) the establishment of agricultural banks; and (5) a permanent tenure of land, subject only to the revision of the assessment by a rise in prices, and light assessment.

It is to be remarked that Mr. Pathak bargains that his railways should be constructed "with rupee capital," not

London capital; and he fairly acknowledges the difference of opinion on the last of the five measures.

Mr. Parekh dealt mainly with the famine, recognising the generosity of foreign sympathy and the efforts of the Government, but throwing in a large admixture of criticism. The main cause of the agricultural distress he found to be "the heavy incidence of the Land Revenue," which he again illustrated from the taxation of rayatwari villages in Ahmedabad, Kaira, and Broach. He traced the consequences in the increase of notices of demand, of distraints and sales of movable property for the realisation of dues, and of cases of relinquishment of lands. He also pointed out the causes of high assessments:

In the greater part of these districts the first settlement of assessment took place when Gujerat was in an abnormal condition of prosperity in consequence of a long sequence of good harvests, the high prices of agricultural produce in consequence of the war in America and the large demand of labour, and the high wages by reason of the construction of railways. The high prices of land, the result of these causes, was the chief element which governed the fixing of the assessment in these districts. In fixing the rates, the circumstances of the inequality in skill, intelligence, and power of sustained work between the different classes of the agriculturists was never taken into account.

Nor, when prices fell, did this fundamental principle stay the official increase of the assessment, which proceeded "on grounds which would have no bearing whatever on the question whether the rayat's powers of bearing the burden of taxation with ease had improved in the interval." Indeed, he reviews the main grounds for increase and finds them mainly improper. The indictment is far-reaching and serious.

The Resolutions covered a large number of important and urgent questions. The famine resolution, while appreciating the efforts of the Government, regarded with regret and concern the penal reduction of the minimum wage, the niggardly policy of suspensions and remissions, the excessive revenue demand in many districts, the extreme rigidity of collection, and the frequent disregard of restrictions laid down in Sir Philip Wodehouse's Resolution of 1874 and in the Act of 1886 with respect to the periodical revision. The plague resolution deprecated "a large interference with the habits and customs of the people," and "the want of uniformity in the administration of plague rules at different places," and expressed the opinion that the expenditure should be borne by Government and not by local bodies. A resolution on the new district Municipal Bill expressed disappointment with the retrograde policy inspiring some of its more important provisions: it would strain the resources of Mofussil municipalities and place municipal corporations under the thumb of officialism. A fourth resolution dealt with the treatment of the brothers Natu, and called for repeal of the Regulation under which they were arrested and deported. One of the most important resolutions bore on education: it claimed more money from the provincial revenues, vindicated the freedom of teachers, called for technical education in the vernacular, and expressed high appreciation of Mr. Tata's munificent project. The omnibus resolution naturally included a great number of ever-pressing subjects which had already been fully discussed at previous Conferences. We only wish that the Report could be largely circulated in this country as well as in India.

A Bombay Correspondent writes (August 10):—In view of the coming coronation the "Statesman" has written some very sensible articles on the importance of the King-Emperor's conferring substantial privileges on his Indian subjects. Your contemporary, always sympathetic towards the legitimate aspirations of the Indians, says that nothing would reach the hearts of the people more than the royal boon of allowing the commissioned ranks of the Indian army to be opened to them. It is a most practical idea, and could be easily carried out if the craven fears which have for long seized our rulers were dispelled. The Indian army is mercenary. Why not have a genuine national army in its place! Why not stimulate the national martial ardour of the many martial races of which India is full, and which did yeoman service in the past, by calling them back to the honourable profession of arms? One such royal and substantial act would bring rulers and ruled nearer each other, and bind them to the person of the King, infinitely more than anything else. Decorations and titles of all sorts and degrees are a drug in the market. Is it not better to follow the old and wise Oriental practice and commemorate a royal accession to the throne by conferring some substantial privilege on the people?

In a letter printed in Wednesday's "Times" the Maharaja of Darbhanga gave expression "to the sentiments of appreciation and gratitude with which the news has been received in India of his Majesty the King-Emperor's intention to create a cadet corps of princes and nobles of the Empire."

The scheme is one which has always appealed to the Indian aristocracy; and the services of the Maharaja of Kooch Behar in the Tirah and of the Maharaja Scindia, the Maharaja of Beekaneer and Maharaja Sir Pertap Singh and others more recently in China afford a proof, if any were needed, of their willingness to aid in the defence of the Empire of which they esteem it a privilege to form a part. But hitherto such opportunities have been few and far between; and the Indian princes have longed for the opening up of a career for their sons in the Army. Their wish has now been gratified, thanks to the kindly interest and the powerful support of his Excellency Lord Curzon of Kedleston; and the British nation may rest assured that his Majesty the King-Emperor's confidence in the loyalty of his Indian subjects and feudatories is not misplaced.

The Maharaja added that "there have been few Viceroys who have done more than his Excellency Lord Curzon of Kedleston to foster and promote the spirit of Imperialism in India."

The "Amrita Bazar Patrika" prints some long extracts from a letter written by a correspondent in London who professes to be able to throw some light on Mr. Pennell's present position. According to the writer, the Bengal Government, in a letter of ten pages, dated May 9, recommend that Mr. Pennell should be removed from the public service and retired on such a compassionate allowance as the Government of India may think fit to allow him. In a later letter even this is withdrawn, while the Government of India fail to find any ground for such an indulgence. It is further alleged by the writer of this letter that the Government have now entirely dropped the charge on which Mr. Pennell was originally suspended. It is now his bad record, especially in Burma, that is given as a reason for his removal from the service! It is even said that a flogging he administered there in 1893 is brought up against him, though it was generally believed that the bad report he received from Burma was owing to his delay in making a return of excise sales—a delay which he always insisted was due to no fault of his own. It would be important to know how far the information of the "Amrita Bazar Patrika's" correspondent is accurate.

The "Friend of India" very naturally expected to find the means of comparing the work of the old and the new Municipality of Calcutta in the "Annual Administration Report of the Calcutta Corporation for 1900-01"; but it professes to be disappointed. With the exception of the re-organisation of the Collection Department, however, it is left with the impression that the reformed "Corporation has no particular reason to be proud of the results achieved." It adds that "unless the Corporation is hiding its light under a bushel in an altogether unusual way, the recent change in the constitution has yet to be justified by tangible results." The old Corporation was especially blamed for its remissness in sanitation, but here the results of the labours of the new one seem ridiculously small. It will be remembered that the "Friend of India" is an Anglo-Indian newspaper.

Remittances on India for 25 lakhs were on Wednesday offered for tender by the India Council, and applications amounting to Rs.7,29,30,000 were received at prices ranging from 1s. 3d. and 31-32nds to 1s. 4d. and 1-32nd. The following amounts were allotted, viz., in bills, Rs.9,11,000 on Calcutta, Rs.3,26,000 on Bombay, and Rs.2,63,000 on Madras, all at an average of 1s. 3.968d.; and in telegraphic transfers, 10 lakhs on Calcutta at an average of 1s. 4.031d. Tenders for bills at 1s. 3d. and 31-32nds will receive about 2 per cent., and for transfers at 1s. 4d. and 1-32nd in full. Last week remittances for Rs.21,64,000 were sold for £144,022, making the total disposed of from April 1 to Tuesday night Rs.7,69,81,295, producing £5,107,365. Next week the amount to be offered will be increased to 30 lakhs.

THE POVERTY OF INDIA.*

In this volume Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has collected a long series of papers, letters, addresses and speeches dealing with the state of India, its Government and people, a monument of his zeal and industry in the service of his country. At the head of the introduction he places those repeated promises of justice and equality, contained in the Act of 1833, in the Queen's proclamation of 1858, in her reply to the address of the Bombay Corporation on the occasion of the Jubilee of 1887, and the speeches of Lord Lytton in the year when she assumed the title of Empress of India. The book tells us how those promises have been kept, and how far India still is from participating in those principles of liberty which have so long been associated with the British name. But beneath this question is one more fundamental still—that of Indian poverty and of its causes, and the elucidation of this is the main purpose of the various pieces that make up the book. Most of these have already been published in one form or another. But they are well worthy of republication, for they contain a mine of information, statistical and general, on the conditions of life of the poverty-stricken inhabitants of India.

All these various papers are held together by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's insistence on the "Tribute," the drain of wealth from India to Europe, as the fundamental cause of Indian poverty. This gives a unity to the work which would otherwise be wanting, and prevents the reader from losing himself amid a variety of conflicting theories or being overwhelmed by a mass of particular details. By that theory, indeed, Mr. Naoroji is willing to stand or fall. To its inception he lays no claim. It was recognised by a long series of statesmen and writers. It is to be found in the famous Minute of Sir John Shore, dated 1787. It is explicitly stated by Lord Cornwallis in 1790, though in his day the drain was ridiculously small if compared with the present figures. Mr. Montgomery Martin calculated that the drain in 1816 was £3,000,000 per annum, and thought that sufficient to account for the impoverishment of the country. The same view was taken by Mr. F. J. Shore in 1837 and by many others afterwards—not least by Mr. James Geddes in his "Logic of Indian Deficit," published in 1871, only some five years before Mr. Naoroji brought the subject before the Bombay Branch of the East India Association of London. But though Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji lays no claim to the inception of this fertile theory, and must share with others the credit of making it known in England and India, it will always be a title to the esteem of his countrymen that he devoted all his great intellectual powers and all the energies of his long public career to putting forward and insisting upon what he believed to be the true causes of Indian poverty. In this, the self-appointed task of his life, he has never faltered. He has never been led aside by more specious and popular remedies, he has never been deterred by disappointment or obloquy; and when at last the bleeding wound is staunched, and prosperity once more returns, then will the millions of India rise up and call him blessed.

Leaving, then, on one side the many other interesting topics with which this book deals—the useful statistics on Indian agriculture and the average income of her people, the long correspondence with the War Office and the Admiralty on the admission of Indians to the Imperial army and navy, the attempt to obtain simultaneous examinations in India and England for the Indian Civil Service, and all the other efforts to make the promises of the royal proclamation of 1858 a reality—let us concentrate our attention on the drain from India to England, to which all other Indian financial and economic questions are subsidiary. The effects of an economic Tribute are not peculiar to India, nor is the theory the invention, as some would have us believe, of Indian politicians. The general case was investigated by John Stuart Mill in the third book of his Principles of Political Economy, without any special reference to India. There he showed that if payments had to be made by one country to another without economic return, not only was there the obvious loss of this amount, but there was in addition the loss due to the forcing of the market, so that the country thus paying tribute had to sell cheaper and buy dearer throughout its foreign trade. This economic theory, applied to the case of India, it has been the special work of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji to illustrate and enforce.

By a curious and happy coincidence this book has been published almost simultaneously with Lord George Hamilton's Indian Budget speech, a great part of which was occupied with this very theory. It is needless to say that the Secretary of State for India is no believer in it. In times past he has availed himself of the counter-theory, that of over-population, to explain the poverty of India. But, as it happens, the last census has left the believers in over-population in a difficult position, for the population whose increase was the root of every evil has unfortunately ceased to grow, and yet the evils remain. Lord George has, therefore, been forced to leave his own entrenchments, thus rendered no longer tenable, and to deliver a frontal attack on the enemy; or in other words he has had to venture on a criticism of the opposing theory of the "tribute" which holds the field. The case of his opponents is thus stated by Lord George Hamilton:—

> India, they assert, is a very poor country; its poverty is annually increased by the yearly drain caused by an excess of exports over imports. This drain is enforced upon India by the necessity of yearly meeting the obligations of the Government in gold in this country, and as this Government by continual borrowing increases these obligations so it quickens the process of impoverishment.

Now in this statement at least one curious error is to be noted. The excess of exports over imports is not the cause of the drain, but the means by which it is carried out. The cause of the drain is the necessity of making payments in Europe without economic return. Some of these payments are of amounts easily ascertained, such as the interest on the debt, the charges of the India Office, and the pensions to retired officials; others, like the private remittances of officials still serving in India, cannot be accurately estimated. The excess of exports over imports forms a rough way of arriving at the total tribute; but that does not make it a cause of the drain.

In his attempted refutation the Secretary of State for India is even less happy than in his statement of the theory which he wishes to refute. His argument may be divided into three heads: first, he denies that the poverty of India is increasing; secondly, he cites the case of the United States, where also there is an excess of exports over imports; and thirdly, neglecting all other payments and fixing his attention on the service of the debt, and then neglecting all other debt save that incurred for the making of reproductive works, railways and irrigation, he argues that the loss, whatever it was once, is not great now, and will probably be changed into a gain in the future. Now of these three arguments the first and third are nothing to the point. Even if it be supposed that the effect of the tribute has only been that, instead of making India poorer, it has prevented her from growing richer as other countries have done—even if it be supposed that it has not made her poor but only kept her poor—is not that sufficient reason for its condemnation? And though it be supposed that all the debt due to railways and irrigation is a benefit to India—and this is surely a large assumption—would not there still remain in debt incurred for other causes, in pensions and home charges of one kind or another, and in the remittances of the English in India, a vast sum which India has yearly to pay? Lord George Hamilton may think that the services she obtains are worth it, but the excellence of those services cannot affect the loss to the country. The most excellent things may be too expensive. And as to the second argument, how are the cases of America and India analogous? Save for a certain amount of American stock held in Europe (and some European stock is held in America), America pays no tribute. Save for this the excess of exports over imports represents the natural balance of trade, and the indebtedness is trifling

* "Poverty and Un-British Rule in India." By Dadabhai Naoroji. (London: Swan, Sonnenschein and Co., 1901.)

compared with her wealth. Otherwise, she has to force no markets. Even if she did think it worth while to pay for the luxury of English administration she could afford it, and she may well find it of advantage to pay for English capital. The drain, such as it is, is more than counterbalanced by her own rapid increase in wealth; but even Lord George Hamilton does not attempt to show that there is any rapid increase of wealth in India. Finally, it may be pointed out that the figures quoted by Lord George Hamilton in regard to America refer to merchandise only, whereas in calculating the excess of exports over imports in India, it is usual to take bullion also into account. Between America and India there is all the difference between what is in the main voluntary business, following the state of the markets, and fixed payments which must be met whatever the economic disadvantage. It is worthy of note that Lord George Hamilton never attempts to meet the argument of Mill on the loss caused by having to force a market.

The stopping of the drain is the great fundamental work that lies before Indian reformers. All else without that is of little use. The curbing of the money-lenders, the prevention of over-assessment, the foundation of agricultural banks, and many other excellent schemes, may be useful palliatives, but while the tribute continues India must remain poor. To insist upon this fact, and to familiarise the public both in India and in this country with it, is and has been the great work to which Mr. Naoroji has set himself, and the present volume is a monument to his insight, industry, and indomitable perseverance.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

Westminster, Thursday.

One of the most remarkable of recent bye-election contests was brought to an issue last Tuesday, when Mr. Beckett Faber was elected member for the Andover division in succession to the late Mr. W. Bramston Beach. For sixteen years the Liberals had regarded the seat as an impregnable stronghold of Toryism. At election after election they offered no challenge to Mr. Beach's return, and when Mr. Judd came forward on the death of the late member to stand as the Liberal candidate he was openly laughed at. Nevertheless, Mr. Judd came within 223 votes of winning the seat. On a larger poll, he would probably have won it outright. The result, showing as it did a diminution of more than twelve hundred in the Conservative majority, has caused something like consternation in Ministerial circles, while, on the other hand, it has given great and much-needed encouragement to rural Liberalism. One effect of the election will probably be the initiation of a village campaign by both political parties. Unfortunately for the Tories, their spokesman, Mr. Hanbury, has already declared that the Government have said their "last word" on land tenure reform.

So far, the bye-elections have left the balance of parties untouched. More and more, however, they have indicated the existence of a progressive tendency towards Liberalism. In every case the Liberal poll has been augmented and the Conservative poll diminished. North-East Lanarkshire will be the next constituency to be put to the test. The conditions there are rather peculiar. Mr. John Colville, the late member, enjoyed a personal popularity which enabled him time after time to double and treble his majority, till last year he was returned with nearly fifteen hundred votes to spare. The victory was the more striking because in neighbouring divisions of the same county the reaction against Liberalism rose to a perilous height. Mr. Augustine Birrell is spoken of as Mr. Colville's successor, and if any man can maintain the Liberal majority at its existing strength it is the ex-member for West Fife.

With elections and rumours of elections to agitate the political atmosphere, the recess is not likely to bring much rest. Already, indeed, the Unionist fuglemen are beginning to grumble at the inactivity of the Unionist leaders. After all, the Liberal leaders are quite as lethargic. If they are showing signs of reviving energy, it is not because of any desire to oust the Government and put a better one in its place, but simply because Imperialist and anti-Imperialist are each longing to spring a surprise on the other. The party generally, as the Andover election has shown, cares little for the jealousies and the wire-drawn distinctions that count for so much in the Parliamentary lobbies, and it is possible that after their autumnal peregrination of the constituencies our eminent statesmen may themselves be brought to see those matters in their true proportions. Even in London, Liberals of all shades are beginning to come together again in a common spirit of protest against the schisms of the Front Bench.

In the new play of "Becky Sharp," produced at the Prince of Wales Theatre two nights ago, one of the characters informs Mrs. O'Dowd that Napoleon has issued a proclamation decreeing pains and penalties against his enemies. "That for his proclamation!" exclaims Becky, snapping her fingers, and the audience roar with delight. Generals Botha, De Wet, and Delarey, have been returning similar insolent replies within the last few days to Lord Kitchener's proclamations. One Boer warrior sent a response which the scandalised correspondents describe as unprintable. Meanwhile, the war continues to be practically over and technically at an end, and if the Boers are still sanguine enough to go on capturing isolated bodies of British troops the only inference possible is that they know no better. Unfortunately, the British Treasury is still being depleted to the extent of considerably over a million sterling a week, and British soldiers are still perishing from wounds and disease. General Baden-Powell, following the later example of Lord Roberts, has declined to accept any public honours till hostilities have ceased, a consummation which he evidently believes to be near at hand. The more general opinion in military circles is that unless the unexpected happens between now and the end of September the war will drag wearily on for many more months.

Meanwhile, Lord Milner has resumed his speech-making. If speeches, proclamations, or bye-elections, could kill the Boers would have been annihilated eighteen months ago. They themselves are very poor orators, and they have not had an election since the war began. Now and again ex-President Kruger permits himself to be interviewed, and then, in our easy chairs, we enjoy the luxury of commenting on the loquacity of the exile of Hilversum, safely entrenched behind Dutch dykes from the fury of his deluded burghers. The country is obviously getting tired of this melancholy farce. Before long, if the signs are not deceptive, Lord Milner and Mr. Chamberlain will find themselves confronted with a national demand for a full and frank statement of the actual facts of the situation.

Disciples of Lavater should betake themselves to a certain window in Victoria Street and feast their eyes there on a series of character delineations which seem to have been designed to shatter our most popular idols. Lord Milner's expressive face is regarded by the physiognomist as the index not only of his mind but also of his digestive apparatus, and both having been weighed in the balance are found not quite perfect. "Should Lord Milner retire from politics," says the seer, "he would probably attain fame as a dramatic writer." Can this, by any possibility, be a deduction, not from the subject's face, but from his famous despatches? In his early days Lord Milner probably dabbled in dramatic criticism. As the physiognomist believes that De Wet would make a good actor, it may yet be the fate of the High Commissioner to write a melodrama for the Boer general and afterwards to pen a critique of the actor's performance.

Mr. Boyle Lawrence's drama of Indian military life, "A Man of His Word," is drawing appreciative audiences to the Imperial Theatre. The hero is one of those exalted beings who are happily only to be met with in stageland. He involves himself in disgrace and his dearest friends in discomfort rather than relieve himself from a stigma which has been cast upon him by the treachery of a fellow-officer. On the stage, however, those martyrs in the cause of a distorted chivalry are always attractive. They wring tears from the sympathetic and a surly admiration from the cynical, and with a Mr. Herbert Waring to give verisimilitude to their vagaries they make the preposterous seem plausible. But perhaps the chief element of success in the Imperial production is to be found in its glowing pictures of Oriental scenery, its picturesque wardrobe, and its procession of dusky-browed Native soldiers.

Imperial Parliament.

Friday, August 16.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE "DEBATE ON THE INDIAN BUDGET."

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON'S REPLY.

THE BOMBAY LAND REVENUE BILL.

ATTACK ON THE CONGRESS.

(Concluded from Page 95.)

Mr. J. E. Gordon, continuing, said: The responsibility was shifted on to the Governor of the Bank of England, but that was where the India Office was wrong. He would remind the noble lord of an answer given by Lord Cranbrook to Mr. Fawcett before the Select Committee to which he had referred. The noble lord was asked whether the Governor of the Bank of England was responsible. Lord Cranbrook said that the India Office was not bound to consult the Bank in any way, unless for consultation as to the money market.

Lord G. Hamilton said that Lord Cranbrook was speaking of an arrangement made outside the contract.

Mr. J. E. Gordon said the noble lord had for a long time told him that this contract, so elaborated before a Select Committee, was an exceptional termination, and that the terms laid down were not to be taken as precedents for future contracts. If the noble lord would read the report he would find that, though correct as to new creations of an arrangement with fresh shareholders, it had no reference to the rate of interest which governed the annuity. On being asked as to whether the Bank of England had any responsibility, Lord Cranbrook answered "not as arbitrators in any sense of the word." Next it was laid down that the Bank of England had nothing to do with the principle, but the principle was what the noble lord had handed over with such disastrous results. He ought to have faced this responsibility and dealt with the principle as a trustee not only for the finances of India, but for the shareholders. Again it was said that the Bank of England had nothing to do with the interpretation. The noble lord differed from his predecessor, and the noble lord had handed over to the Governor of the Bank of England the interpretation of this principle, which had cost the company £3,000,000. He maintained that the Governor of the Bank of England had made a mistake with reference to the rate of interest. He had met with great difficulty in lodging responsibility in the right quarter, but the Governor of the Bank of England had stated that the average rate of interest during the last two years on the Government debt of India was £3 5s. But the question was as to the rate of interest received in London by the receivers of Government dividends, by the holders of Government stock. The Bank of England stated that the average rate of interest received by investors in the three Indian sterling stocks was £2 17s. He maintained that the noble lord was still responsible to see that this contract was honestly carried out. The noble lord said that he did not know the terms of a great financial operation which he had paid for.

Lord G. Hamilton said he had left this decision to the Governor and Deputy Governor. The Courts of law had decided against the hon. member and his friends.

Mr. J. E. Gordon said that not only had the precedent of the contract been established by a Select Committee as a solemn obligation, but it had been followed in the case of the Sind and Eastern Bengal Railway. For 20 years the contracts had been as clear as daylight. There was a moral responsibility attaching to a matter of this kind, and he did not think the noble lord's conscience would be satisfied until he had found out the details as to how this contract had been wound up. If the India Office did not know, he must ask the noble lord to make enquiry. He would then be able, with a good departmental conscience, to look into the matter and see whether he ought to retain within his Parliamentary pocket three millions of money which belonged to other classes of persons.

Mr. Leamy.

Mr. Leamy complained that while in India vast masses of the people were stricken with famine, the country was ground down by taxation. He was not going to say that they were worse governors of India than the French would be, but his contention was that there must be something wrong with a people whose wants and wishes were never heard in that House. That night they had heard an Indian gentleman talking of some petty question of technical education in India when millions were dying of hunger.

Sir Edgar Vincent.

Sir E. Vincent thought the Secretary of State and the Government of India might be congratulated on the most satisfactory statement of the finances of India which had been brought forward for many years. In the optimistic tone which had been adopted, and which, he believed, was thoroughly justified by the circumstances, there was no doubt the Secretary of State was at variance with a large body of private opinion in India, but from the returns of revenue and the tables of commerce he confessed that he did not see any reason either for disappointment or pessimism. What he regarded as of considerable interest was the continued large importation of treasure to India. The statistics of last year showed that the total import of gold and silver into India amounted to more than seven millions sterling. If they went back one year further they would find that it amounted to eight and a half millions, and those figures, being largely in excess of the average imports, appeared to him to disprove to a large extent the theory of the impoverishment of the Indian rayats. Indeed, taking the years from 1870, it would be found that the aggregate importation of treasure into India in those 30 years had amounted to the gigantic sum of 200 millions sterling, and that the rate of importation during the last 15 years had been 50 per cent. higher than during the first 15 years. He considered that those facts, which were indisputable, showed two things. First, that the current talk about the extreme poverty of India had been somewhat overstated, and, secondly, that, with occasional intermissions on account of famine, the wealth of India was pursuing a gradual and even a rapid path of progress. (Hear, hear.) The exports last year amounted to, approximately, 73 millions sterling. This figure compared with that of the highest year previously known—75 millions sterling. There had thus been a drop of only 4 per cent., although the year under review was one of almost unexampled famine. These figures seemed to him to prove that all the pessimistic forecasts regarding the baneful influence upon the export trade of a fixed exchange of 1s. 4d. had been disproved by recent experience. In relation to the currency it was important that we should take stock of the situation and that the House should realize various laws which appeared to be established by recent experience. The first was that the influence of a low exchange upon exports was largly transient and momentary. A falling exchange was a temporary stimulus to export, but it ceased to operate as a considerable factor the moment the exchange had established itself at the lower level. The second deduction was that the real factor in determining the price of exchange was the demand for currency for the purposes of internal trade in the country itself. The two phenomena of a large export trade and active internal circulation occurring at the same time, the high exchange which occurred with them was wrongly attributed to the large exports instead of to the active internal circulation. The phenomenon on which those responsible for the finance of India should keep their attention was the amount of the supply of currency afforded to India in relation to the demand for it. They might neglect to a very large extent the figures which were usually considered as a guide in this matter—the relation between exports and imports. He considered the creation of non-agricultural resources to be perhaps the most important duty now devolving upon the Government of India. The diversification of employment could only be rapidly achieved by the introduction of extra-Indian capital and European supervision and organization. At present there was a suspicion that the official classes were not altogether friendly to private enterprise—that there was a certain hostility to any considerable profit being made by private individuals—and if a steady flow of capital into the country were desired it would be well to find means of reassuring capitalists and investors on this point. If the Government did so they would be able in a few years to give to commerce and industry a far larger share in supporting the labouring population of India. He was convinced that by so doing the wealth of our great dependency would be increased, and that this reform would conduce to the greater happiness of a large number of the population, that it would strengthen and popularize our rule in India, and tend to consolidate our Empire. (Cheers.)

Lord George Hamilton's Reply.

Lord G. Hamilton welcomed the intervention of his hon. friend as a great financial authority in an Indian debate, and as a valuable contributor to their discussions. (Cheers.) The views which had been expressed by his hon. friend as to the industrial condition of India would receive most careful consideration. Turning to what he described as the extraordinary speech of the hon. member for Elgin and Nairn, he said that earlier in the evening two gentlemen had been brought to the bar for insulting members of the House. But he did not think that the language these gentlemen employed was more insulting than the language used by the hon. member. The hon. member practically accused him of deceiving a number of persons, who had in consequence lost their money, that he jumped at a snap issue, and implied that the Parliamentary honour of the Secretary of State was at stake, that his answers were founded on gross ignorance, and that £3,000,000 were in Parliamentary pockets which belonged to other people. This was very strong language; but the House did not understand what the hon. member was talking

about. (Laughter.) He was amazed that any hon. member should apply such language to another member of the House. As Secretary of State three years ago he had to decide whether or not they should under the existing contract purchase the Great Indian Peninsular Railway. The Government decided to buy it, and they availed themselves of the option in the contract to purchase the railway by annuity. The terms of that annuity had to be priced, and they were settled by the directors and the Government without any dispute. Then according to the contract the question was referred to the Governor and the Deputy Governor of the Bank of England to decide the rate of interest payable on that annuity. The rate of interest was decided at £2 17s. Certain shareholders protested, and an appeal was made to him to allow the case to go to the Courts. He consented, and the case went to the Court, which decided in favour of the decision of the Governor and Deputy Governor. An appeal was carried to the Appellate Court, and it also decided in favour of the Bank of England. The shareholders declined to carry the case further. Those were the facts. Reference was next made by the hon. member to the decision of a Select Committee which sat 20 years ago, of which he was chairman. He was acquainted with the purport of that report; he carried it by his own casting vote. It dealt with the purchase of the East Indian Railway. The period for purchasing the main line had arrived, but there was a branch line for which the period of purchase had not yet arrived. A contract was arranged for the purpose of buying the whole line. This was referred to a Select Committee. Three members of the committee thought that the terms were too favourable, and the greatest difficulty was found to get them to assent to this exceptional arrangement. He decided it by his casting vote, and the committee decided that the contract should not in the smallest degree determine the interpretation of contracts in future. He thought that the hon. member must on reflection see that he had used unpardonable language.

Mr. J. E. Gordon said that no one in the House had a greater respect for the noble lord, and if he had conveyed the impression which the noble lord indicated he withdrew the language complained of. He had asked for information on three occasions as to the actual arrangement on which this great financial undertaking hinged, and the noble lord had said that he was ignorant and had refused information to the shareholders who had elected him as chairman.

Lord G. Hamilton said he was one of two parties obliged by statute to go to the Governor and Deputy Governor of the Bank of England to arbitrate between them. He declined to cross-examine these gentlemen with reference to the method in which they had arrived at their decision. ("Why?") Supposing that the decision had been very favourable to the hon. member and his committee of shareholders?

Mr. J. E. Gordon said he belonged to no committee of shareholders. A year ago a meeting to make this great arrangement was held in the City. He explained the position to the shareholders, and 400 gentlemen present were so indignant with the callousness of the directors in this matter that they elected him as chairman and asked him to proceed with an appeal to the House of Lords. The case never went there because better terms were expected from the India Office. On the understanding that the India Office would reconsider its decision to grant better terms he withdrew from the matter.

Lord G. Hamilton asked, supposing the decision had been one which was satisfactory to the hon. gentleman and the 400 discontented shareholders, what would the hon. gentleman have said if he had insisted on the governor and deputy governor explaining the exact methods by which they had arrived at their decision? The hon. gentleman must know, as every business man knew, that if by the statute the Government were compelled to leave a question to an absolutely impartial authority which was above suspicion, those concerned must abide by the decision at which it arrived. He must protest against the remarks of the hon. gentleman. He might not have wished to cast any personal reflection, but such an attack did permanent harm to the office of which he was for the time being the head. (Hear, hear.) The hon. member for Camborne entered into the question of the famine, and he gave expression to the view that a Parliamentary grant would have done much to prevent loss of life. If it would have that effect, he would have unquestionably asked for it; but there had been during the whole of the famine no lack of funds. Let him remind the House what was meant by famine in India. A famine in India arose from drought. Eighty per cent. of the population were agriculturists, and if there was no rainfall for ten months the whole occupation of 80 per cent. of the population ceased. What would the position in this country be if 80 per cent. of the population were thrown out of occupation? Even in the richest part of this country, in Lancashire, there was a temporary failure in the cotton trade, and there was terrible distress in that part of the country. It must be borne in mind that when a drought occurred not only did employment cease, but the wage-earning power ceased also, and all means of transport became disorganised. That was the difficulty that had to be faced. It had been suggested that the famine could be killed and the wealth of the country immensely increased by irrigation works. If that were the case the Government of India would have spent very much more money on irrigation. But these last two famines had occurred almost entirely in Bombay and the Central Provinces, and the conditions that had to be dealt with were of an abnormal and unprecedented character. In Bombay it was impossible to carry out irrigation works. Under certain conditions irrigation paid exceedingly well. Where there was a continuous supply of water, not affected by the local rainfall, running through a country where it could be distributed by gravitation, there was at once a condition of things which made irrigation of extraordinary agricultural value; but there were only a few areas in India where that could be done. At the present moment, he thought, with one exception, there was hardly an irrigation work in Bombay. It was absurd to lay down the proposition that by spending enormous sums of money in irrigation works the famine could be stopped. He was, however, so far agreed with the hon. gentleman as to say that the matter should be properly looked into. The hon. member had suggested that as the Government had lent a considerable number of troops for Imperial purposes in South Africa and China it was clear that they were not wanted in India, and there ought to be a permanent reduction made in the military establishment. He had always welcomed discussion on Indian matters in that House on the understanding that no attack was made on men absent in India who, under very difficult circumstances, had to perform an unpleasant duty, and he welcomed the kindly criticisms of the hon. member. But he was hardly treating the Indian Government fairly when he suggested that there should be a permanent reduction of the military establishment. All the Indian Government had done was to run the risk of making a loan to the Imperial authorities of a certain number of troops who were to be repaid as soon as possible. While he disliked unlimited expenditure, he could not hold out any hope of a reduction of the military establishment below its usual normal strength. (Hear, hear.) In proportion to the civil population the military establishment in India was extremely small, and he should feel bound to accede to all requests which were made to him with a view to maintaining the efficiency of the Indian Army. The hon. member had estimated appalling figures in regard to the loss of life by famine. He could not accept those figures. The loss had been very great, but in these visitations far more people died from drinking bad water than from want of food. One of the difficulties which had frequently arisen was to obtain a supply of pure water. The effect of drinking impure water was to produce cholera, and then the loss of life was great. He admitted that the loss of life was much greater than was expected, taking into consideration all the exertions that had been made to save life. It was estimated that the loss of life was a million and a quarter, of which three-quarters of a million were in British territory. But the hon. member stated the loss at 27,000,000.

Mr. Caine: Over 25 years.

Lord G. Hamilton said the population of British India had increased by over 33,000,000 in 20 years, and, if they added the 27,000,000 the hon. member said had been lost by famine, it followed that the increase of population had been 60,000,000 in 20 years, which was absolutely phenomenal. Another hon. member had described the Bombay Land Revenue Bill as an attempt on the part of the Bombay Government to deprive occupiers of their homes. There was no such intention behind the Bill. In the Punjab there were cultivators of the land who had complete tenant rights, but there was a limitation on their powers of alienation. There was no doubt that in the Bombay case the Government, during the next few months, would have to make a considerable number of grants to occupiers who had practically forfeited their homes, but whom the Bombay Government wished to re-instate. The object of making these new grants was to prevent these occupiers from again getting into the clutches of the money-lenders. He could assure the hon. member that the whole of the agitation against this Bill was a money-lenders' agitation. In India there were loud denunciations in the popular Press and in the Congress of the terrible state of insolvency and indebtedness of the land cultivators, but when the Government attempted to relieve them from the mony-lending class the whole agitation of the money-lending class was turned on the Government. There was no institution in India which was so strongly impregnated with the money-lending influence as the National Congress.

Mr. Caine: I cannot accept that statement.

Lord G. Hamilton said he did not expect the hon. member to accept it. He would look very carefully after this Bill. It was not intended to enable the Bombay Government to impose hard terms on the occupiers, but to try and give them a chance of getting on their legs again.

Mr. Caine: All I ask is that there shall be no hurry in passing this Bill. It is an important measure, and there are appearances about it which I do not like.

Lord G. Hamilton said he would take care that the matter was thoroughly considered, and that whatever was done in this case should not be a bar to any future financial legislation for the purpose of curtailing alienation in other parts of India. (Hear, hear.)

THE SOLE RESOLUTION.

The usual formal resolution was then put from the chair, and agreed to, as follows:—

Resolved,—That it appears by the Accounts laid before this House, that the Total Revenue of India for the year ending on the 31st of March 1900 was £68,637,164; that the Total Expenditure in India and in England charged against Revenue was £65,862,541; that there was a surplus of Revenue over Expenditure of £2,774,623; and that the Capital Outlay on Railways

and Irrigation Works not charged against Revenue was £3,035,672.—Secretary Lord George Hamilton.)

Resolution to be reported.

Saturday, August 17.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE PROROGATION OF PARLIAMENT.

THE KING'S SPEECH AND INDIA.

The Lord Chancellor read the King's Speech, "in his Majesty's own words," which contained the following reference to India:—In my Indian Empire the recovery of agriculture and trade from the depression caused by the famine has been somewhat retarded by the lateness of the rainfall. The most recent information is, however, reassuring, and prospects are reported to be much improved. Should these favourable conditions continue, a rapid reduction in the present area of distress and the restoration to the population of their usual means of livelihood may confidently be expected.

THE "DEBATE ON THE INDIAN BUDGET."

SOME OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS.

THE "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN."

Lord George Hamilton's speech on the Indian Budget last night was one of the usual optimistic and, we fear we must add, unconvincing statements that Secretaries for India seem impelled by tradition to make year after year. After two successive famines of the worst kind, which have cost the State £15,000,000 and have involved a loss of £50,000,000 to the agricultural interest in Western India, it seems somewhat strange that the Secretary for India should be able to give an exceptionally favourable account of India's financial position. We should not expect a cheerful Budget speech in England after a year of severe industrial depression and bad harvests, and when the Indian Budget shows a large surplus under similar circumstances we cannot but regard it with suspicion. One cause of the surplus is obvious enough; the despatch of 30,000 Indian troops to South Africa and China has relieved the Indian Exchequer for the time of part of its military burden. This has shown once more that India is forced to consult our interests, not hers, in fixing the strength of her army; for if the Indian army were just strong enough for the defence of India and no more, it could not spare 30,000 men for lengthy wars oversea. Apart from this, it is clear that in times like these a satisfactory Indian Budget must mean high taxes. Can India really afford so prosperous a Budget, or is a semblance of financial prosperity being obtained at a ruinous cost? It seems to have occurred to Lord George Hamilton that his statement would sound like a paradox, for he defended himself in advance against the charge of being too hopeful. But his statistical arguments to show the prosperity of India was sadly weakened by the admissions which he had to make in referring to the Famine Commission. It has repeatedly been declared by Anglo-Indian and native authorities that the land assessment is too high, that the cultivator, especially in Bombay, is rented so heavily by the Government that he cannot save even in good years, and thus falls an easy prey to money-lenders and to famine. Last night Lord George Hamilton himself acknowledged that the assessment was sometimes too high and that sometimes it was raised too suddenly—admissions which, from a Secretary for India, mean a very great deal. He had also to confess that the indebtedness of the peasantry constituted a very serious economic and political danger that, in the view of the Government, justifies even so revolutionary a measure as the Bombay Land Revenue Bill, which prevents the cultivator who is in arrears with his land tax from alienating his holding. Considering that the vast majority of the popluation of India are small cultivators and that upon their welfare the fabric of the State depends, these are very grave statements for a Secretary for India to make. Yet he cannot realise their significance when in the same speech he assures the House that poverty-stricken India was never in so good a financial position as she is to-day.—(August 17.)

THE "TIMES."

For three years famine has ravaged many parts of India, and yet the financial condition of the country during that period has been, on the whole, remarkably prosperous. In 1899-1900, though the famine expenditure, exclusive of loans, was £3,442,000, the revenue was so satisfactory that it not only met the whole of this exceptional charge, but left a surplus of £2,774,623. In face of further drought and continued famine, the Secretary of State made provision in the following year for a deficit of £826,000. In point of fact the expenditure for famine rose to £5,561,000. Such, however, was the expansion of the revenue, that the estimated deficit of £826,000 turned into a surplus of £1,671,000. If the large profit derived from coining rupees were added, the surplus would be upwards of £4,500,000. And the outlook for the current year is very encouraging. Four months ago the Indian Government thought that they could count upon a surplus of £690,000. The latest information, recording an improvement in the revenue, puts the surplus at nearly three times as much. We repeat these facts, because it is the persistent policy of a small, but active, school of politicians here and in India to ignore them—to chronicle and magnify everything that seems to tell against our rule and to be silent as to evidence of prosperity. They will have it that India is a poor country, becoming under our rule poorer. They will insist that England is draining her of her resources. All the usual tests of prosperity being against this, all of them must be ignored by those who have their theory to maintain at all cost. There is another side, it is true, to the matter. The latest financial statement, like its predecessors, leaves an impression that an element of chance counts for very much in the prosperity of India. The recurrence of famines in quick succession shows how imperfect are the appliances with which we control her real enemy. The extension of railways will do much, and there is still need of further irrigation works. But the task which lies before the Government is great, and is not summed up in the catchwords, "More railways, more irrigation works."—(August 19.)

THE "DAILY NEWS."

If Lord George Hamilton would apply his mind to the actual condition of the people instead of preaching the doctrine that surpluses spell prosperity he would begin to learn his lesson. As it is, he has not mastered the rudiments of Indian problems, and his speech of yesterday, though sympathetic in form, shows once more that he is only able to conceive of the affairs of India in water-tight compartments. He does not see, for instance, the bearing of famine on land revenue or of the land tax on famine. Nor does he understand that indebtedness and land alienation necessitates an entire re-casting of the fiscal system if the people are to be saved from ruin. Yet he admits enough to destroy his own case and to expose the folly and wickedness of revenue hunting. People at home are unable to understand that the government of India is, in the main, a matter of revenue collection, or that the justice, of which they hear so much, is, nine-tenths or ninety-nine-hundredths of it, a county-court process for enforcing the demands of the money-lender against his victim. What with the fixed cash payments that the peasant has to make for his land, and the exactions of the money-lender, backed by our courts, the peasant is being bled to death. Surpluses may disguise it, and famines, like that of last year, may make us forget the chronic famine which is destroying the splendid races of the Indian continent. But all the optimism of the India Office cannot hide the fact that under the British system, a system of good intentions, but machine-made methods, utterly unfitted for the East, the peasantry are sinking into a desperate condition. Nothing but the awakening of public opinion in this country will stop the rush for revenue which is ruining India. But when is the awakening to come?—(August 17.)

THE "STANDARD."

It is to be feared that most members passed with reluctance from the exciting joys of a Breach of Privilege Debate to the hearing of Lord G. Hamilton's statement on the Indian Budget. It is a significant fact that the Radical members, who are fond of insisting on the inadequate space provided for the consideration of the finances of India, did not think it necessary to attend yesterday in any number. At no given moment were six of them in their places. . . . . When speaking at the meeting of Council, on March 27 last, Lord Curzon candidly acknowledged that the achievements of his Government were partly due to "windfalls," which could not have been foreseen, and cannot be relied upon to recur. The wars in South Africa and China have relieved India of a considerable part of the cost of maintaining its Military establishment by throwing the cost of the troops on the Imperial Budget. But when every allowance is made for these exceptional factors it remains the case that the elasticity of the Revenue arises from the general prosperity of India, which is, in turn, the result of good administration, of the extension of the railways—which are a direct source of profit to the Treasury—and of a sounder policy in regard to the Currency. . . . . All is not well with the peasantry, and both in the Punjab and in Bombay the Government have been alarmed by the increasing transfer of peasant holdings to the money-lender. But this process is explained by other influences than the decadence of agriculture—by the improved efficiency of the law, and by the fact that it is no longer so safe as it was to wipe off a load of debt by murdering the usurer.—(August 17.)

THE "SPEAKER."

We do not know that the Irish landlord in his palmy days ever went so far as to contend that the length of his rent-roll was a measure of his tenants' prosperity; but this is what Lord George Hamilton asks us to believe in the case of India. . . . . He joins issue contemptuously with a small school in this country, as well as in India, who are perpetually asserting that our rule is bleeding India to death. The small school points to the excess of exports over imports and draws deductions, which Lord George Hamilton brushed away by pointing to the case of America. But he entirely misses the point. America gets a return for her exports, whereas in the case of India many millions are shipped away every year with no return at all. India, in fact, pays tribute under another name, whether it be in the shape of guaranteed interest on the thousands of miles of railways that are not wanted and which can never pay, or of salaries and pensions for the military and civil establishment. In the Native States the revenue fructifies. In British India it is so much wealth extracted without equivalent. Once upon a time the little school

had a spokesman who put the matter forcibly:—

"It is not in itself a thrifty policy to draw the mass of revenue from the rural districts where capital is scarce, sparing the houses where it is often redundant and runs to waste in luxury. The injury is exaggerated in the case of India, where so much of the revenue is exported without a direct equivalent. As India must be bled, the lancet should be directed to the parts where the blood is congested, or, at least, sufficient, not to those which are already feeble from the want of it."

These canons, which are essential to an understanding of the Indian problem, are from the pen, not of Mr. Hyndman, but of Lord Salisbury, and before the Secretary of State enlarges again upon the obliquities of vision of the little school we recommend him to have a talk with the little school's master. But Lord George Hamilton is opposed to Lord Salisbury on another point. As at present advised he is quite content to go on drawing the mass of revenue from the rural districts. We put aside his statement that the Indian Government have never attempted to increase their revenue by putting up taxation. Anyone who has studied the settlement reports, with their elaborate accounts of the re-assessment of the peasants' lands must be aware that the land taxation is always being increased. It is the business of the revenue officer to pile up taxation, and his settlement manual tells him how to do it. That mistakes are sometimes made Lord George Hamilton admits, and the economic conditions of the peasantry disturbs him, but he is as far as ever from perceiving the connexion between the deterioration of the rayats and the pressure of the British revenue system.

I readily admit that it may be that the rise under resettlement may sometimes be too sudden, and that here and there assessments may have been too high. And it is further an undoubted fact that the indebtedness of the occupier in many places is a serious economic and political danger. I do not believe, however, that the general rate of assessment is too high; on the contrary, compared with what it was under native rule it is undoubtedly moderate and should be well within the general paying capacity of the cultivator provided he is free from the clutches of the money-lender.

"Provided he is free"—why the bottom fact of the situation is that the cultivator is bound hand and foot by the money-lender. The land system under which the village held direct from the State, together with the village community, has been turned upside down by the dual control of the collector, with his demand for a fixed cash payment, and the money-lender, who takes the farmer's crops and lands as security for advancing the revenue. To bandy statistics about land revenue without an appreciation of the qualitative change which British rule has imposed upon the conditions of land tenure, to talk of the rayat as though he was a free agent, instead of the wretched serf of the financier who seizes his crop by way of interest, and allows him just enough to go on with, is the way of Indian Secretaries, but it is not the way to understand India.—(August 24.)

THE "MORNING POST."

Lord George Hamilton, when introducing the Indian Budget in the House of Commons last night, expressed a fear that his statement might be regarded as unduly optimistic. Though it has fallen to his lot to make no fewer than twelve of these statements—and therefore a familiar knowledge of Indian finances must be assumed on the part of the Secretary for India—on no previous occasion have the figures been so favourable. They are really astonishing. If the Pro-Boers could be taught anything, they might well be recommended to study the practical results of British administration on the finances of India and Egypt as an earnest of the similar change which must shortly take place in the Transvaal when the effects of the former corrupt regime shall have yielded before our methods of finance. . . . . The unskilled taxpayer at home can only marvel at Lord Curzon's wonderful success and brilliant policy. It is surely no ordinary man who has guided India so skilfully into this economic advance, who has reorganised our frontier policy, who has provided an admirable working arrangement, if not an ideal settlement, of the currency problem, and whose sympathetic eloquence, we are told, has done so much to explain to the natives the true beneficence of Great Britain's rule. We trust that health and time may be granted him to work out his manifold and varied schemes. For he has shown himself to be not only a man of letters but a statesman, and not only a statesman but an excellent man of business.—(August 17.)

THE "MORNING LEADER."

The "Times" has again hit upon the one comment which is absolutely wide of the mark. It says that the financial condition of India is "remarkably prosperous." Nay, it is extremely angry with "a small but active school of politicians" who dare to assert that "India is a poor country, becoming under our rule poorer," and who "insist that England is draining her of her resources." It is not clear who these politicians are. But they would appear to date back to John Bright, whose speeches—say in 1853 and 1859—would be quite apt, in essential matters, to this year's or next year's "debate on the Indian Budget," and whose warnings were condemned and dismissed in the language now held by the "Times" towards anybody who cannot always say "ditto" to the India Office, especially when it contradicts itself on successive days. That India is a poor country the "Times" may learn, if it pleases, from the writings of any competent Anglo-Indian, from and before John Lawrence to Sir William Hunter. That it is becoming poorer is at least suggested by the last census returns and by the fact that famine is growing at once more frequent and more intense. But the "Times" has nothing to say about the increasing severity of famine or the arrest of population in India. Finally, whether it be accurate or not to say in general terms that "England is draining her of her resources," it is mere matter of arithmetic that, even in a year of famine, England draws from India something between thirty and forty millions for which India gets no economic return. And, as that able Anglo-Indian officer, Sir George Wingate, put it:—

Taxes spent in the country from which they are raised are totally different in their effect from taxes raised in one country and spent in another. In the former the taxes collected from the population are again returned to the industrious classes. But the case is wholly different when the taxes are not spent in the country from which they are raised. They constitute an absolute loss and extinction of the whole amount withdrawn from the taxed country. . . . . Such is the nature of the tribute we have so long exacted from India.

Argument of this kind is usually met by unsolicited testimonials to the Indian Civil Service. Happily the merits of that distinguished bureaucracy are not disputed. The question is whether they are not, under the existing system, proving too expensive for the "remarkably prosperous" country which loses millions of its sons by starvation not because it does not contain food enough for them, but because they have not and cannot get three halfpence a day to buy it.—(August 20.)

THE "GLOBE."

It has seldom, if ever, been the good fortune of an Indian Minister to be able to make such a satisfactory statement as was laid before the House of Commons by Lord George Hamilton last night. . . . . Lord Curzon and the able men who have cooperated with his efforts must be heartily congratulated upon the prospect with which the new century opens. Without being unduly optimistic, there is every reason to look to the future with courage and hope.—(August 17.)

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW."

We can only pause once more in admiration of the bureaucrat's delightful faculty of phrase-coining. Nothing in all his dialectical excursions exceeds in beauty the phrase "reduction or avoidance of debt." The memorandum puts down to that phrase no less than £3,551,533 but it is to be feared that the inhabitants of India are not appreciative of the relief thus brought. Debt, at any rate, continues to grow handsomely, perennially, spreading its suckers further and further over the lives of the people until they now yearly die in swarms beneath our rule. The Government is always borrowing, and, like every other component part of this great and glorious Empire, must borrow or perish. It borrows directly to keep itself going, it borrows for "public works," which constitute additional suckers in many instances, particularly in the case of military railways, barracks, fortifications, and such like; it borrows for legitimate railway extension, and indirectly through its dependencies, the railways bought up on annuities which keep adding to their capital commitments. This steady accumulation of capital on the backs of the Indian people, the tremendous scourge of the military charges and the load of the alien civil administration whose pensions paid in England alone take now some £3,000,000 per annum, account for the pace at which all India is rushing down towards exhaustion and its alien Imperial Government towards collapse. We may be quite sure that if the inhabitants of India, whose interests we profess to have at heart, were allowed any, the most insignificant, voice in determining the nature and extent of the burdens they are called upon to bear, they would render no small part of our extravagance impossible, but in India taxation without representation is a heaven-invented system of government specially blessed by the Almighty for our aggrandisement.—(August 24.)

THE "DAILY CHRONICLE."

There can be no doubt that the great task now before the Indian Government is a thorough system of irrigation. But there are others, some of which were mentioned last night. It is useless increasing the cultivated ground if the unhappy cultivators are to fall into the clutches of money-lenders who make their advances upon the value of the holding. Lord Curzon has from the first steadily set his face against the legality of this English practice in a country where it was formerly unknown, and in the Punjab Land Alienation Bill he has made a courageous attempt to grapple with the evil; it may be possible to supplant the money-lender altogether by a system of agricultural banks, such as have been tried with great success in Germany, and are rapidly making their way in Ireland. Another excellent proposal is an enquiry into the whole method and object of education in India, with a view, we may hope, to checking the further growth of half-educated Baboos who are unfitted to work either with their hands or their heads. The remaining point is the disputed question of the payment of the Army and the just apportionment of the burden between India and the English Exchequer. We cannot agree with Mr. Caine that the employment of some Indian troops in South Africa and China proves that the Army in India could safely be reduced by that amount. But we think with him and the other members of last year's Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure who signed the minority report that the Imperial Treasury should bear a larger share of the expense of British troops quartered in India. It appears to us that the proposal to relieve the revenues of India of the charge of at least 20,000 out of the 73,000 such troops does not go in the least too far, and that if this were carried out the chief grievance against our rule in the country would be removed.—(August 17.)

THE "ECHO."

It is a remarkable circumstance that whenever any subject connected with the good government and administration of the Empire is concerned the discussion is left almost entirely to those politicians who are least anxious to parade under the title of Imperialists. . . . . In many quarters it is enough that the British flag should float over millions and millions of subjects of all races, religions, and colour. It matters not whether those subjects are free men or slaves; happy or miserable; prosperous or ground beneath the heel of poverty; living their own lives or losing all the outlines of native character. . . . . The Indian Budget yesterday was satisfactory in that it shows the Indian Government can pay its way; more than can be said for certain other of our possessions. But in the speech in which he submitted the Budget, Lord George Hamilton admitted that the famine had caused a loss of fifty millions, and that the increasing indebtedness of the peasantry and the extent of land alienation were the subjects of much anxiety in the government of India. Lord George Hamilton does not see that those processes, as Sir William Wedderburn pointed out in the interview we printed yesterday, are indissolubly bound up together. Recent famines in India have not been results of a general drought. They have not implied a scarcity of grain throughout the country. They have been local, and if the peasants had had either grain or credit to draw upon the famines would have been very much less serious. The peasantry used to have such resources to fall back upon. This is the central point in a very grave situation. The peasant is passing more and more into the power of the money-lender; and the land is passing more and more out of the hands of the peasants. . . . . There are two things to be driven out of the public mind. The first is the view, adopted by Lord George Hamilton last night, that we can use our Indian army as a kind of Imperial reserve, paid for by India. The second is that every famine is an "act of God," and we can only open a Mansion House Fund and trouble ourselves no further about it.—(August 17.)

THE "SPECTATOR."

India, in short, as a continent is prosperous, though about 17 per cent. of the people are still excessively poor, as they are here too. Although in the East prosperity and content do not always go together, the people being less desirous of comfort, still the result is thoroughly creditable to the British capacity for administration, and British caution in interfering with local officials. —(August 24.)

THE "WESTMINSTER GAZETTE."

It is gratifying to learn that a considerable amount is to be spent upon irrigation, for in that direction no doubt lies mitigation of the great disasters from which India periodically suffers. The cost of armaments, however, mounts up year by year, and we quite sympathise with those who think that the Imperial Treasury might fairly be called upon to bear a larger share of the expense of British troops in India than is at present the case. This is a point on which the intelligent subjects of our great dependency feel keenly, and some relief in the direction indicated would be in every way a wise step. We regret to notice that Lord George Hamilton once again spoke in "an almost empty House." That, unfortunately, and not at all to our credit, is always the case when India's affairs are being discussed.—(August 17.)

THE "SCOTSMAN."

Lord George Hamilton takes just credit to himself for having resisted the proposal of the faddists who, introducing ill-informed sentiment into finance, wished Parliament to vote five millions in aid of the Indian famine. Had it been carried into effect, the Indian surplus would have been increased by that sum; we should have been taxed more heavily in order that the Indian Exchequer might more largely overflow. In the current year it is believed that the surplus will come not far short of two millions —nearly three times the original estimate. The Indian State railways, besides fulfilling economic, industrial, and military purposes of incalculable value, are now making a profitable return on capital. The King's Speech takes note of the gratifying fact that while the recovery of trade and agriculture in the famine districts had been somewhat retarded by the lateness of the monsoon, the outlook has been much improved by the recent rains, which are described by the Indian Secretary as "sufficient," although not abundant. In consequence "the restoration to the population of their usual means of livelihood may confidently be expected." The suffering has been widespread, protracted, and terribly severe. But, for the first time in history in the case of the failure of crops over so vast an area, it has been a partial and not a general misfortune, and it has yielded proof both of the marvellous resources of the Indian soil and people and of the energy, efficiency, and genuine humanity of the Indian administration.—(August 19.)

THE "GLASGOW HERALD."

But it is open to question whether the condition of India would not be a great deal better than it is if the Government did not attempt to do so much on its own account. It is a good thing to develop the railway system, and we are glad to note that a further large expenditure is to be made this year in this connexion, but it would be far better if private enterprise could be drawn into railway construction and into productive industrial works. Theoretically, the Indian Government does encourage and assist private enterprise in industrial undertakings; practically, it discourages and stifles it. There are too many "bosses," and too frequent changes among them for a satisfactory continuity of policy in this respect. Projects organised by private capitalists have been repeatedly abandoned in disgust because of the differing views and interferences of successive officials whose co-operation or approbation were needed. Lord Curzon strongly favours the encouragement of private enterprise and the attraction of British capital to India, but it is doubtful if even he will overcome the palsy of the existing system of officialism. The country is now ripe for a great onward movement. Affliction is, we hope, behind her. The material condition of the great mass of the people is better than ever it was; more land is under cultivation, and the yield per acre has greatly increased; coal-mining is now prosecuted to the extent of 6,000,000 tons per annum, and is being annually increased; cotton and jute mills are being erected in larger numbers than ever; and the people have learned to look to other industries than agriculture. Lord Curzon has instituted special Commissions to enquire into the best methods of furthering, improving, and extending the irrigation and education systems of the country. He might do still more service by instituting a special Commission of merchants and financiers to consider the best means of attracting British capital into enterprises which will not be made unremunerative by over-zealous or over-dilatory officialism.—(August 17.)

THE "ABERDEEN JOURNAL."

The plague has been largely stamped out, but the great drought that has prevailed in Western India has been unequalled in its dimensions, intensity, and duration during the past century. It is estimated that in three years this continuous drought has entailed a loss on the agricultural community of Western India of £56,000,000. We presume even the Indian National Congress could scarcely feel justified in blaming the Government of India for this drought. Indeed, according to an interview with Sir Wm. Wedderburn, published in a London paper, the Indian National Congress takes a very benevolent view of British rule in India. The ex-member for Banffshire declares that the National Congress regards the continuance of British rule as a necessity. It is recognised that the sole alternative would be Russia and anarchy, and the congress has no wish for that. The object of the congress is to "strengthen British rule" by bringing it into closer connexion and sympathy with Native opinion. A very excellent idea no doubt, but one which the congress takes very curious methods of carrying out. Sir William says India suffers from chronic destitution, and that this is largely due to the fact that, while the country is essentially a country of local variations, there is a stereotyped system of government applicable without adjustment or modification to all parts of the Continent. The figures presented by the Secretary for India last night do not bear out Sir Wm. Wedderburn's allegations of "chronic poverty" or of the injurious effects of the existing system of government. No doubt there are millions of poor and destitute people in India, but on the whole the country is wonderfully prosperous in spite of plague and famine in certain provinces, notably in Western India. The croakers have been busy about India as about other parts of the empire, but Lord George Hamilton was able to dispel all the evil prophecies.—(August 17.)

THE "NOTTINGHAM EXPRESS."

It is not surprising that Lord George Hamilton, in making his annual Indian Budget statement last night, should have regretted that it was brought forward so late in the Session. Similar regret has been expressed on former occasions without any steps being taken to remedy the evil. It is a pity that what concerns our largest dependency should be thus relegated to a period of the Session when, naturally, its consideration must be hurried, and when a large portion of the members have left to enjoy the recess. More especially is this to be regretted at a time when India, which has been passing through a period of deep distress, so much needs the advice of the British Parliament. It is to be hoped that these repeated expressions of regret from the Secretary for India will lead the Government to make an effort so to arrange that the Budget shall be taken earlier. . . . . It is perhaps the case that too little attention is paid to Indian affairs by the home Government. Such a rich possession ought to have our greatest care. The famine caused by the drought is one of India's greatest miseries, and while it is a matter of thankfulness that the resources of the country have been equal to the relief required, it would be better if more attention were directed to the prevention of its recurrence. Much has already been done, but what has been done is a long way from sufficient.—(August 17.)

THE "BIRMINGHAM DAILY POST."

The introduction of the Indian Budget gives each year an opportunity to the Imperial Parliament to consider the material and financial condition of the hundreds of millions of people for whose government they are responsible. The vote then taken sanctions the taxes that are to be levied upon that vast population, including in many cases the rents they shall pay for the land upon which their living depends, and the expenditure that shall be incurred for all the services, civil and military, in the administration of the Eastern Empire. It might be thought, upon such an occasion, that considerable interest would be manifested as to the principles on which our Indian policy is founded, and the manner in which, for the coming year, these are to be practically applied. No such feeling, however, was aroused. The House, which had been crowded whilst the question of its privileges was under consideration, rapidly emptied when the editor and manager

had been reprimanded, and only a few members remained to listen, in a half-languid manner, to a statement of the proposals directly affecting the prosperity of an Empire and the welfare of its subjects. This apparent indifference was partly to be accounted for by the time at which the estimates were submitted, for the last day of a wearying Session gave no chance for a complete examination of so great a scheme of taxation and expenditure. But no doubt the main reason for the neglect was that the bulk of the members felt that they had not the knowledge necessary to understand the details of Indian finance, nor to enable them to criticise effectually the policy of the Government. It does not follow, of course, that the control of Parliament is not a valuable reserve force to be exercised should occasion arise. . . . . Looking to the future—the policy to be pursued and the results to be anticipated—it is evident that the efforts of the Government must be largely directed to endeavours either to prevent or (this for the time being impossible) to greatly reduce the area subject to famine, or to modify its results. There are two main directions in which this activity may be exerted. One is in the construction of railways and roads; the other in the provision of facilities for artificial irrigation. There has been sometimes a kind of rivalry between the respective advocates of these systems with regard not to the ultimate necessity of either of them, but of the priority of their claim upon the energies and finances of the Government.—(August 19.)

THE "SHEFFIELD TELEGRAPH."

No amount of general prosperity should cause public attention to be diverted in the least degree from attempts to deal with the devastating famines which are India's sorrow. The question is not merely one of relief. As regards that there is much to be said for Lord George Hamilton's view of the importance of India being self-sustaining. What is most pressing is that the inhabitants of the famine districts shall in some way be made less dependent than at present upon agriculture, and by consequence be placed in a better position for meeting the visitations which come upon them. Many suggestions have been made—in our own columns and elsewhere—by authorities upon Indian questions with this object, and it is to be hoped that they have been duly considered by the Government. British rule in India has conferred many blessings upon our fellow-subjects there, but it shows no greater result than would accrue from a successful effort to cope with the appalling famine problem.—(August 17.)

THE "DUNDEE ADVERTISER."

What is by courtesy called the Indian debate in the House of Commons continues to be the most perfunctorily performed of all the duties of that Chamber. Invariably brought on just when the Session has reached its last gasp, when three-fourths of the members have already taken their departure, when the remainder long to be off, it is unreal in the last degree. In these circumstances the Secretary for India makes a statement which is always rosy, and which the few who have mastered Indian problems declare to be as remote from the realities as are the gaudily tinted chromographs of the almanac-maker from the realities of life. For this state of things the House is only partly to blame. Few of its members are interested in India, but the long-standing practice of Governments disenables those who are from making effective criticism. The first step in reform will be the placing of the salary of the Secretary of State on the British Estimates. At present that functionary possesses an immunity from criticism enjoyed by no other member, and so long as he is paid out of the Indian Treasury the best of all opportunities of discussion of his policy will be withheld.—(August 17.)

BREVITIES.

It is by no means the least of the regrettable eccentricities of Parliamentary procedure that the discussion of the Indian Budget is habitually reserved to the extreme fag-end of the Session, when members are too keenly interested in accelerating the prorogation to give it that attention which its importance demands.—The "World" (August 21).

Lord George Hamilton was able last night to make the usual statement in regard to the finances of India, and if the House of Commons had any real desire to supervise the finances of the empire it would insist upon this statement being made earlier in the year, so that there would be time to study it. But, although it affects the welfare of many millions of British subjects in the most vital manner, it never is studied, and few members of the House of Commons make any effort even to understand it. We need scarcely add, however, that it is of vastly more importance than the trumpery breach of privilege case that was treated so seriously at the beginning of the sitting.—"Notts. Guardian" (August 17).

The belated tale which Lord George Hamilton had to tell yesterday with regard to the condition of India is admirable in itself and of excellent augury. The hand of adversity has lain heavily on the land. The ravages of famine and plague have cast upon the Government of India extraordinary burdens and tremendous responsibilities. The recuperative power which has been shown is little short of marvellous, and is a striking answer to those who have so often foretold impending financial disaster in the Far East and the lasting impoverishment of India.—"Morning Advertiser" (August 17).

The English nation, as well as the teeming millions of our fellow-subjects in our empire in the East, have good reason to be dissatisfied with the belated appearance of this important financial statement. If this were the first time the delay had occurred it might be allowed to pass unnoticed. Unfortunately, it is the invariable experience every year, and should, accordingly be strongly resented as another of the many examples of Ministerial mismanagement.—"Leicester Daily Post" (August 17).

It is matter of painful notoriety that India was recently visited by one of the severest of those constantly recurring famines that afflict the country, and from which it seems to be destined to suffer, under whatever rule or government its people may find themselves, and whatever arrangements may be made to lessen the dire effects of those natural calamities.—"Newcastle Journal" (August 19).

As regards India, it is not a little remarkable that while the general interest in that country has become closer and better-informed, the number of men in Parliament—faddists they may be called for short—who had infallible specifics for promoting the welfare of India by superimposing Western ideas upon Eastern traditions has greatly decreased. That is something to be thankful for.—"Glasgow Evening Times" (August 17).

The Secretary for India took an optimistic view, as if he thought that India had reason to be thankful that a Tory Government was in power.—"Leeds Mercury" (August 19).

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

RAIN URGENTLY NEEDED.

507,000 PERSONS ON RELIEF.

The following telegram from the Viceroy, dated August 24, has been received at the India Office:—

Famine. Week's rainfall has been very deficient in parts of Madras (South), West Punjab, inland Burma; fair rain has fallen elsewhere, but irregularly distributed, and does not make up the deficiency in total to date. Generally agricultural prospects fairly favourable, but more rain is urgently needed in part of Gujarat, Bombay, and Madras Deccan, Madras (South), and generally in rice districts throughout the country. Excessive rain has caused damage in North Central Provinces. Prices tending downwards generally, and have fallen substantially in Gujarat and in part of Bombay Deccan. The decline in the number of persons demanding relief mainly confined to Gujarat, not yet extended to Deccan districts. Number of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 423,000; Bombay Native States, 41,000; Baroda, 27,000; Haidarabad, 8,000; Central India States, 2,000; Central Provinces, 4,000; Mysore, 2,000. Total, 507,000.

The Secretary of State for India has received the following telegram from the Viceroy, dated August 17:—

Famine. Good and general rain has continued; and, though total amount is only three-quarters of normal in Upper and Central India and half normal in Gujarat, prospects fair in Bengal, Bombay, Madras, good elsewhere. Early rice harvest has relieved local distress Assam. In part of Central Provinces a break is wanted, but more rain is much wanted in Bengal for rice transplanting, also in part of Gujarat, Madras, and Bombay, Deccan, Madura, and Mysore. Prices falling Madras, Central Provinces; stationary elsewhere. July death-rate per mille for Bombay affected area below two in all districts except Surat, Satara, Sholapur, Bijapur, where between 2 and 2.50. In southern districts rate higher, reaching five in Belgaum, apparently consequent on plague. Number on relief works and gratuitous relief fallen Bombay by 13,000, Baroda 5,000. Reduction of relief large in Kaira, where during past month numbers fallen from 50,000 to 6,000. In Ahmedabad improved conditions have influenced numbers very little, and elsewhere decrease small or increase has occurred. All relief operations have been closed in Madras. Number of persons in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 438,000; Bombay Native States, 44,000; Baroda, 26,000; Haidarabad, 8,000; relief discontinued in Madras; Central India States, 5,000; Central Provinces, 4,000; Mysore, 4,000. Total, 529,000.

PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO INDIA.

To be obtained from
THE BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS,
84-85, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

Reports of the Proceedings at the Annual Sessions of the Indian National Congress, from the 3rd to the 14th Session. 2s. each, post free.

The Skeleton at the (Jubilee) Feast (Congress Green Book I.), by Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, Bart. (being a series of suggestions for the prevention of famine in India). Post free, 7d.

Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure: Evidence-in-Chief of the Indian Witnesses. (Congress Green Book II.) Post free, 1s. 10d.

The Proposed Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions in India. Memorial to the Secretary of State. With two Appendices. (Congress Green Book III.) Post free, 1s. 2d.

Two Statements presented to the Indian Currency Committee (1898), by Mr. DADABHAI NAOROJI.

Speech by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, M.P., in the House of Commons, August 14, 1894, on the Debate on the Indian Budget.

Ditto do. in the House of Commons, February 12, 1895, on the Debate on the Address.

Ditto do. on British Rule in India (1898).

Presidential Address by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, M.P., delivered to the Indian National Congress at Lahore, 1893.

Presidential Address by Mr. A. M. Bose, M.A., delivered to the Indian National Congress at Madras, 1898.

Speeches of Mr. Alfred Webb, M.P., President of the Indian National Congress, 1894-5.

Valedictory Address of Mr. Alfred Webb, M.P., delivered at Bombay, January 17, 1895.

Speeches of Mr. D. E. Wacha delivered at the 9th, 11th and 14th Sessions of the Indian National Congress.

Is the Government of India Responsible to Anyone, and if so to Whom? Speech delivered at Croydon by Mr. W. C. BONNERJEE.

The Famine in India. Speeches delivered at a Public Reception to Mr. Vaughan Nash on his return from the Famine Districts, July, 1900.

Mr. A. O. Hume's Farewell to India. Speech delivered at Bombay, 1894.

India Reform Pamphlet IX. The State and Government of India under its Native Rulers. 3d.

The Indian National Congress: its Aims and Justification. By ROBERT KNIGHT.

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